

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated November 24, 2009 (the Action).

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication on page 6 of the Action that Claims 2, 6-8 and 15-16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 1, 3-4 and 9-13 stand rejected in the Action under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,760,491 to Zankl (Zankl). Claims 5 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zankl in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,082,797 to Antonette (Antonette). Claims 11 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

In order to expedite prosecution and without prejudice or disclaimer to filing a continuation application directed to previously presented subject matter, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to generally incorporate the subject matter of allowable Claim 2 and have amended Claim 14 to generally incorporate the subject matter of allowable Claim 15. Claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form and is also in condition for allowance as indicated in the Action. Claims 2, 15 and 10-13 have been canceled. Additional minor amendments have been made to address claim dependencies.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claims 1, 3-9, 14 and 16 are in condition for allowance as indicated in the Action and the same is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any matters outstanding of resolution, he is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at 919-854-1400 for expeditious handling.

Respectfully submitted,



Laura M. Kelley
Registration No.: 48,441

USPTO Customer No. 20792
Myers Bigel Sibley & Sajovec
Post Office Box 37428
Raleigh, North Carolina 27627
Telephone: 919/854-1400
Facsimile: 919/854-1401

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CERTIFICATION OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via the Office electronic filing system in accordance with 37 CFR §1.6(a)(4) to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on May 24, 2010.

Signature: _____


Joyce Paoli